(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the remedial steps taken to reflect true picture of these PSUs in balance sheets?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) to (c) No anomalies were pointed out by CAG in the balance sheet of Indian Airlines for the year 2001-02. In fact, CAG has given a 'NIL REPORT' for the year 2001-02 which has been published on page No. 47 of the Annual Report of Indian Airlines Limited. They have made some observations in the accounts of Airports Authority of India for 2001-02, which pertains to understatement/ overstatement of certain provisions in the accounts and non-compliance with some procedural requirements. Necessary remedial action on these observations has been taken by AAI.

However, in a separate report on the accounts of PSUs in general (CAG's Report No. 2 of 2003) CAG has observed some overstatements and understatements in respect of both Indian Airlines Limited and Airports Authority of India. This report was received in May, 2003. These observations relate to the year 2000-01 and not to 2001-02. Replies will be sent to CAG.

Construction of Heritage Corridor Project near Taj Mahal, Agra

*31. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:
SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Central Government have asked the U.P. Government to undo the damage caused near the Taj Mahal due to the work on the Heritage Corridor Project;

(b) if so, details thereof;

(c) whether any inquiry is being conducted by the State Government on this issue;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether such construction violates the statutory limit of 300 metres; and

(f) whether any further reduction in the river width through reclamation would affect the safety of the monument's foundation as per the report of the IIT Roorkee?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) to (f) As per information made available by the Ministry of Environment and Forest, the Government of Uttar Pradesh had taken up reclamation work in river Yamuna without due approval of the said Ministry.

The matter pertaining to Taj Heritage Corridor Project in Agra is a subject matter of the PIL filed before the Hon'ble Supreme Court by Shri M.C. Mehta (WP 13381/84). Hon'ble Supreme Court of India on 16th July, 2003 directed the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to inquire into the entire issue and the matter is *subjudice.*

Excise Duty on Textile Industry

*32. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Andhra Pradesh Government has suggested to waive excise duty on textile industry to improve competencies and capabilities to the level of global standards; and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Following the receipt of representation from CM, Andhra Pradesh in this regard, a number of steps were taken. To illustrate:

(i) powerloom weavers, having an annual turnover of Rs. 35 lakhs were given excise duty exemption on the unprocessed fabrics for the first clearance of Rs. 25 lakhs;

(ii) manufacturers of readymade garments having an annual turn over of Rs. 40 lakhs were given excise duty exemption for the first clearance of Rs. 30 lakhs during the year;

(iii) substantial procedural simplifications were made for the textile units, which have come into the excise net for the first time:

(iv) facility has been provided to an exempted powerloom weaver to pass on excise duty credit even without obtaining excise registration;